FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN NEW BRUNSWICK: A REPORT ON THE CURRENT POSITION AND A DISCUSSION ON THE WAY AHEAD

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INTRODUCTION

This study of French as a second language (FSL) in New Brunswick was initiated by the Department of Education. It was prompted in the main by three considerations: (1) FSL in New Brunswick has undergone considerable changes over the last decade or so. Although, from time to time, several studies have been made on the developments in FSL, the entire effort has never been looked at comprehensively by an external observer. (2) FSL in New Brunswick has also arrived at a point in its development where certain decisions have to be taken about future policy, which makes it appropriate for an outsider who is not committed to any particular provincial point of view to make comments and to offer suggestions. (3) Finally, an immediate reason that prompts the study in the current year is a review of government services which is in progress at present; this review also includes questions about the FSL issue, and it is obviously of help to the Department of Education if some of the questions on FSL that are likely to arise in this review of government services have already been under consideration.

My task as the external observer and consultant has been to examine the FSL services in New Brunswick and to evaluate what I have seen, read, and heard in the light (a)of my experience of language teaching in Canada generally, and (b)of my knowledge of available research. More specifically, if on this relatively short acquaintance with the FSL programs and issues in New Brunswick I gained the impression that many important questions were left unanswered, I would make an assessment whether a more thorough long-term study would be warranted.

The study is based on numerous conversations with people involved in language education in New Brunswick and the reading of over 30 documents (see attached list), including course materials. I also visited a few Core French and Immersion classes in Fredericton and spent a day at the teacher inservice training program in Tracadie. I would like to thank all the people who helped me in gathering the information by answering my questions patiently and fully. There are too many to name individually, except three who were my main mentors throughout the study, Mr. H. Malmberg, the Deputy Minister of Education, Mrs Viviane Edwards, Coordinator of Second Language Services in the Department of Education, and Mr Barry Lydon, Consultant for French as a Second Language in the Department of Education.

PART 1
BACKGROUND

In line with many other jurisdictions across Canada, New Brunswick has, over the last quarter century, expanded and strengthened its provision of FSL in Anglophone schools. However, it is only in the last fifteen years, from around 1970, that New Brunswick has made a special effort to establish much more comprehensive FSL services. This new thrust was largely prompted by political events towards the end of the sixties, the publication of the Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism and the subsequent changes in New Brunswick: the declaration of New Brunswick as a bilingual province and the promulgation of its Official Languages Act in 1969.

The main purpose of this declaration was of course to provide services for the Acadians in New Brunswick and to take measures which would enable the French-speaking population, constituting one third of New Brunswick's total population, "to preserve and enrich a threatened language and culture" (Doc 1:8) But it was clear from the start that this important political development had implications for the language education of the Anglophone majority in the Province. Anglophones in New Brunswick--with a few vocal exceptions--have readily accepted the main educational consequence of the Province's official bilingualism, namely that it requires a first-rate FSL program in its schools.

Three main reasons for a strong FSL policy for New Brunswick are readily apparent: The first is quite utilitarian. While it is not necessary in a bilingual province for every individual citizen to be bilingual, it is a great advantage for young people to become as bilingual as possible because of the bilingual job opportunities that official bilingualisation entails. Many professional, vocational, administrative, educational, and cultural services must be available in both languages, and, consequently, many jobs will require proficiency in both official languages. Moreover, similar possibilities exist outside the Province, federally and in other parts of Canada. The purely practical advantage for the rising Anglophone generation to be as proficient in French as possible has been widely recognised by New Brunswick Anglophone parents. It has probably been an important factor in the pressure that has been exercised by parents on school authorities to provide the best possible French language training. This was so in the seventies and from my conversations with representatives of associations, including the New Brunswick Chapter of Canadian Parents for French and the New Brunswick Home and School Association, this is still so today. There was no indication that the demand for FSL had in any way diminished. It seems to be as strong today as it has ever been.

A second reason for good FSL programs is political. The argument for it would of course apply to other parts of Canada as well, but it is particularly important for the bilingual future of New Brunswick as a province with proportionately the highest

minority of Francophones. If Anglophones and Francophones are to continue to live harmoniously together, it is vital that the two language groups know and understand one another and can communicate with one another on equal terms. Consequently, an educational system which helps this process fulfils a sociopolitically important function, and the fact that the school system is criticized for not being effective enough in this respect(Doc 28:30) is obviously a matter that a Minister of Education cannot dismiss lightly.

That is to say a French program in the schools of Anglophone communities in a bilingual province is not just another school subject. It has a special sociopolitical significance. If it is well designed, it can contribute to an atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect. It can counteract prejudice, stereotyping, and general anti-French attitudes and for this reason alone cannot be treated like any other subject in the school curriculum. It is disturbing to read in several of the documents about the "dissatisfaction on the part of the public with second language programs" (Doc 18:7) or, as it is stated in another document "There are too many students who complete high school with little or no proficiency in their second language"(Doc 33:44). A good FSL program is of direct importance for the well-being of the Province, a factor that, in my view, has to be borne in mind in the funding of FSL services.

A third reason for a good French program goes beyond regional needs. It offers Anglophone youth in New Brunswick schools, through becoming relatively bilingual, the opportunity to be open to the French language and culture not only in New Brunswick, but also in Quebec, in the whole of Canada, as well as in France and the world Francophonie. French is not only a necessary second language for life in New Brunswick itself, it is a valuable educational asset generally and potentially an outstandingly useful foreign language. The educational benefits of first-rate French programs in New Brunswick are of considerable significance for the Province itself as much as for other parts of Canada. Although several of my informants were as critical of the FSL provision as the documents I have just quoted there was unanimity in saying that over the last ten years enormous strides had been made in the improvement of this situation. Furthermore, there was general agreement that FSL should move ahead and build upon these past and current achievements.

PART 2
THE GROWTH OF FSL IN NEW BRUNSWICK

The documentation (particularly Doc 1:10-15 and Doc 18:1-16) describes vividly the increasing awareness in the New Brunswick school system for the need to do something about its FSL instruction. Changes were slow in coming up to the late fifties, picked up the pace in the sixties, and by the seventies gained the momentum they have today:

> "It was during the early seventies that the English speaking community began to pressure the Department of Education for improved opportunities for French as a Second Language education. By this time it had become clear that improvements had to occur if English and French New Brunswickers were to co-exist." (Doc 1:14)

In many ways this parallels what has been happening elsewhere in Canada; but the challenge of making the Province bilingual introduced a sense of urgency and led to some remarkable developments which are not easily matched in other provinces.

Like elsewhere, FSL began to take its place and modern shape in the school system around 1963 when French first became compulsory in Grade 5 in New Brunswick schools (Doc 1:12) as a twenty-minute programme. Since then it has expanded. In the seventies it became 'Core French' or the 'Core Program' in contrast to 'Immersion' which began to develop and spread from about 1970. Since 1978 an allocation of 1,200 hours for Core, which had been demanded for a basic minimum in the *New program for Ontario students* in 1977, also became the accepted standard in New Brunswick as a desirable universal minimum for Core French to be made available from year 3 to year 12 as follows:

Year	*Hours per year*	*Total (hours)*
3-6	90	360
7-9	135	405
10-12	150	415
		1215

School districts are required to offer this time allocation with an optional start at grade 1 and an optional continuation through the final two years of Senior High School in grades 11 and 12. However, several reports indicate that even today the 1,200 hours are a target rather than a fact in many schools. The Department of Education is moving towards mandatory French in grades 3 and 4 by September 1985, in grade 2 by September 1986, and grade 1 by September 1987. The intention is to offer all students the possibility of reaching the 1,200 hour target by the end of grade 10.

Immersion was first introduced in Moncton in 1970, preceded by an immersion-type program in Saint-John in 1968. It has gradually spread during the seventies so that by 1982-3 it was available in 17 school districts with over 8,700 students in 81

schools. (Doc 1:14; see also *Language and Society*, no. 12:6-7) In 1984 Immersion is being offered in 20 out of 26 Anglophone school districts from grade 1 to 12. (Doc 25)

The merits of Immersion programs are widely acknowledged in New Brunswick at the Department level and in the school districts. Immersion is recognised as a most effective way of realising the bilingual objective in New Brunswick. Among my informants, the representatives of the New Brunswick Chapter of Canadian Parents for French were the most vocal advocates of Early Immersion as the unquestioningly best solution for FSL in New Brunswick. While they acknowledged the importance of a good Core program and the merits of Late Immersion, they were concerned "about the discouragement of Early Immersion, and the touting of Late Immersion as 'just as good' and 'less disruptive' by certain professionals, Department officials, and members of the government." (Doc 32)

Many of the documents, however, and several other informants expressed concern about Immersion. They did not question its effectiveness but its repercussions on employment of Anglophone teachers, the impact it has on regular English classes in the same school, the funds it absorbs either directly or indirectly, and the administrative complications it entails. It is largely with these concerns in mind that there is a great deal of interest today in Late Immersion as a less drastic alternative to Early Immersion, or in the advantages of strengthened Core programs whether they are called Extended, Enriched, or Enhanced.

One of the school districts, No.26 (Fredericton), which has a strong commitment to Immersion, undertook a detailed study of the issues setting out impartially the characteristics, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of different patterns of Immersion and Core. (Doc 16; for details see also Part 4 below)

Administratively, FSL has been greatly strengthened in New Brunswick since the first appointment of an FSL consultant to the Department of Education in 1966 (Doc 18:13). Today, there are in the Department of Education one Coordinator of Second Language Services, a Consultant in French as a Second Language, a Consultant for French Immersion, and temporary appointments of curriculum specialists. Most school districts have a full-time coordinator of French and some have an additional administrative appointment for Immersion programs.

Core programs. The need to improve the quality of the Core programs substantially was recognised since the beginning of the major push in the early seventies. In 1974, French (and English in the French system) at the junior high school level was identified as an area in need of a more concerted effort. It led to the introduction of the Junior High School Project. Special funding under this project enabled some school districts to employ a coordinator, and 46 additional French teachers and correspondingly to reduce class size, to offer French on a daily basis, to

have adequate inservice facilities, and to acquire necessary materials (Doc 30,34).

Curriculum design and materials. As part of the development of Core, attention has been paid to curriculum design and materials. Core curriculum guides have been prepared or are in process of preparation for all three levels of the system. A massive curriculum guide for French at the elementary and junior high school level was issued in 1978 (Doc 2); a revised version of the elementary portion of this guide appeared this year(Doc 8), while a senior high school document was offered in 1982 (Doc 5). These documents have all been thoughtfully prepared and they specifically invite reactions of teachers for further revisions. They indicate the influence of recent developments in language pedagogy; for example, the senior high school document draws on the Council of Europe *niveau seuil* syllabus. All these documents lead to questions which have bearing on the frequent criticisms I have heard of the Core curriculum and future developments: How have these guides been used? To what extent have they made an impact on teaching the Core curriculum in the school districts? How are they intended to be used in order to contribute to coherent curriculum development?

In addition to these guides with itemized lists of structures and vocabulary, the Program Development and Implementation Branch of the Department of Education has recently prepared certain excellent Core program materials in areas in which published materials were not easily obtainable, for example, *Pour l'amour du français* (Doc 4) and *Phonétique:guide* (Doc 6). Elsewhere some recently produced published programs are in use or are piloted in some school districts. (Doc 3) Older programs like *Le français international*, officially approved at the secondary level, are supplemented by some interesting additional materials prepared by the Department, such as *Potpourri secondaire* (Doc 7). The documents on materials (e.g. Doc 3, 15) indicate appropriate choices of published programs currently available. The overall plan suggests necessary concern about good articulation between grades and levels and continuity in the arrangement. In practice, it may not be quite as good as it looks on paper, because one of the complaints conveyed to me by some informants was poor coordination and a lack of articulation in the Core program from grade to grade.

A considerable effort has also been made in Immersion to provide appropriate materials at all levels. The preparation and supply of Immersion materials in French and in other subjects taught in French in the Immersion programs is in fact looked after by a consultant in the Department of Education who has done much to initiate curriculum development for Immersion and to put the right kind of material at the disposal of the growing Immersion programs. (Doc 10 A.S.,11, 12,as well as docs 13 and 14). A great deal has been achieved in this respect, but no doubt a great deal more remains to be done.

Although, in all, a tremendous effort has been made in curriculum for both Core and Immersion, I believe much of it could be improved and strengthened. This would no doubt require more time still, but a suggestion will be made later in this report with regard to curriculum development.

Recent Core developments. Returning once more to the developments in the Core program, it was the 1978 FSL curriculum guide that recommended 1,200 hours as a minimum for the Core program. Since then, school districts have begun to institute a Core program which attempts to meet the Department's proposed minimum target. The Department with the help of a special funding program, the 1,200 Hour Program, has reviewed the applications of school districts and has allocated funds to enable school districts to implement the 1,200 hour program. Like other provinces, in particular Ontario, New Brunswick appears to have used funding in accordance with hours of instruction (referred to as "Time on Task") as the main administrative mechanism to induce strengthening of the FSL Core program. The 1,200 Hour Program has also provided approximately 100 additional teachers in seventeen school districts.

There has been for several years a recognition in the Department of Education as well as in the school districts that the Core program could be considerably strengthened by additional language experiences which would give Core students some of the advantages that are offered by Immersion. For example, one school district offers an "Enhanced Core Program" which has four components:"the Elementary Course, French Immersion Summer Schools, the Enriched Junior High School Course and the High School Follow-up" (Doc 20:5). Another school district has built into its Core program the possibility of an "Extended Core" at elementary and junior high level and my informant was enthusiastic about the effectiveness of this arrangement. (Doc 31)

The New Brunswick Department of Education has taken advantage of the Special Projects category of the Department of the Secretary of State to secure federal funding for some of these Core-related activities in the interest of FSL, such as the Bursary Program. In addition, provincial funds are being used to support such programs as the High School Summer Immersion Program (Doc 19:36-7) for grade 10 or 11 students, as well as the Immersion Camp Stay program for younger Core students which offers an opportunity to study French in a camp atmosphere in the summer months. In 1984, thirteen school districts arranged such programs for periods lasting from one to four weeks for close to 1,000 students.

FSL evaluation. A rather extraordinary pioneer effort that New Brunswick has made in FSL since the early seventies is an FSL evaluation project. Through a contract covering the period 1973 to 1978, the Department of Education secured the help of the Educational Testing Service, Princeton, NJ, to provide tests in second language reading and writing as well as an interview

test. This testing program has given New Brunswick an unusual awareness of standards of achievement. The interview test, which is an adaptation for the use in schools of the well known Foreign Service Interview Test, is the most interesting part of the testing program. Scores on the interview are related to five levels of proficiency.

Three valuable outcomes of this testing program for language teaching in New Brunswick should be noted. First of all, the repeated application of these tests has given New Brunswick educators a realistic appreciation of achievement and shortcomings in the FSL program. For example, in 1978 it led to a valuable study, *The Base Year Study of the Second Language Competencies of Grade 12 Students*, carried out by the Evaluation Branch of the Department of Education. It is obviously a matter for concern for an educational system if it is faced with the conclusion, as this study was, that "sixty percent of those interviewed exhibited no usable knowledge of French"(Doc 19:7). Such information is obviously not pleasing but it gives the policy maker a base line to start from and leads to a search for improvement. (See Note on ETS levels, p.II)

A second most important result of the use of the FSI/ETS scale has been that the concept of language proficiency levels has become widely accepted by educators in New Brunswick. The documents refer to, say, level 2 or level 3 in a way that suggests that these levels have become common currency. I noticed also that several of my informants, some of whom were not language specialists, referred to these levels as meaningful indicators of proficiency for students and teachers.

Finally, the use of the ETS interview has given teachers who have participated in the testing process an understanding of oral proficiency which they believe has been beneficial to their own teaching. This positive 'backwash' effect of the ETS interview was mentioned to me repeatedly by some of my informants.

At this point it should also be mentioned that an external evaluation of the Immersion program has recently been made by a team of the Modern Language Centre of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. (Lapkin and Swain 1984; doc 35) This study examined the French language skills of Early Immersion students at grades 3, 6 and 9, and Late Immersion students at grade 9. According to this study Early and Late Immersion students in New Brunswick achieve comparable results in French to Immersion students elsewhere in the country. Interestingly, there was not much difference between Early and Late Immersion students: "With the exception of the difference in listening comprehension scores in favour of the early immersion group, no other French test scores distinguish early and late immersion performance" (Lapkin and Swain 1984:31). The investigators warn however against the inference "that the early immersion program could be supplanted by the late immersion alternative." According to their results of a self-assessment questionnaire, Early Immersion students have greater confidence in their use of French than Late Immersion

students, and in the view of these two investigators Early Immersion has the edge over Late Immersion.

Teacher training. One of the most persistent complaints blamed for the failure to have a major breakthrough in the Core program is the quality of the language proficiency of the Core teachers. This criticism appeared in some of the documents; it was made by several informants as a key issue, and it was even mentioned to me by teachers themselves at the Tracadie inservice training course. The need for constantly upgrading the teachers has been recognised by the Department of Education for many years, and much of the funding the Department disposes of is devoted to teachers' courses, teachers bursaries and the like, enabling teachers to improve (a) their command of the language and (b) their teaching methodology.

The four weeks summer program for teachers, held annually since 1975 at Tracadie and organized by the University of New Brunswick, fulfils an important teacher training function. It provides fifty or so teachers every year with an immersion experience, and an opportunity to upgrade themselves in language and teaching methodology. The placing of the program at Tracadie, housing students with local Francophone families, as well as some of the course work, and, finally, local visits to places of interest enable the teachers not only to learn the language but also, at the same time, something of Acadian life and culture. (Doc 29)

Another valuable program has arisen out of the problem of displacement of Anglophone teachers which has been an unfortunate consequence of the spread of French Immersion. To reduce the effect of Immersion on the employment of Anglophone teachers, the Department of Education has initiated a one-year Retraining Programme for Anglophone Teachers who want to switch to teaching in Full Immersion. A number of teachers (twenty-seven in the first three years) who have already some facility in French are offered the opportunity to study for one whole year in a French-related program at university level. The selected candidates receive their full salary. This project was set up in 1982 as a pilot project for a three year period, and the evaluation report of the first year considers the project as a fairly successful enterprise which largely fulfilled what it set out to do (Doc 25). This program can therefore be considered worth continuing.

Conclusion to overview

In conclusion to this overview of the growth of FSL in New Brunswick, it is appropriate to offer the following personal comments on the developments that have taken place.

From the documents I have examined as well as from the numerous conversations I have had I have gathered a justifiable sense of achievement. The bilingual issue in Anglophone education is being tackled. There may be differences of opinion on how best to resolve the outstanding problems of FSL. But there is unanimity in the belief that considerable progress has been

made over the past ten years or so in the advancement of FSL in schools. The Department of Education and the school districts have established, during that period, a solid framework for second language education which is well-prepared to take care of the varied and exacting demands for second language instruction that have to be met in this bilingual province. An administrative structure has been built up and adequate budgetary provision has been made to develop and maintain programs. Although I heard some complaints in individual cases about lack of funding, for example, for needed materials and field trips, in general, the range and level of funding, indicated in the budget statements I had access to, appeared to offer what was needed for FSL and the necessary support services. There are opportunities for teacher training, retraining, and inservice activities. A considerable curriculum development effort has been made. A number of different types of programs are in place ranging from Core French, Enhanced Core, Extended Core, Mini-Immersion, to Early or Late Total Immersion. Sophisticated approaches to evaluation have been initiated and have been applied regularly for several years, so that they are by now well integrated into the system.

A cadre of knowledgeable and capable specialists deal with the complex issues in a professional manner. This group is constantly on the look out for ways of remedying weaknesses and of improving the quality of FSL teaching. Thanks to their initiative, New Brunswick has access to, and is regularly in touch with, available sources of information and professional assistance inside and outside the Province. The personnel in the Department of Education and the persons who staff the administrative services and training programs, such as coordinators in the school districts or staff at Tracadie, are well qualified and informed so that the discussion of the language teaching issues among those who have responsibility for second language programs is uptodate, relevant, and in line with current thought elsewhere in North America. In certain respects, particularly on the question of evaluation, New Brunswick is a leader in Canadian language education. (Liskin-Gasparro 1984:23)

It is to be hoped that in the process of the government reform it will be recognized that the structures that have been built up for French as a second language and the program options that have evolved make good pedagogical sense and respond to vital educational and sociopolitical needs.

It is important that this framework is preserved so that what has been achieved over the past fifteen years in the development of bilingual capability through the school system in New Brunswick is not accidentally lost in the desire to reduce costs.

In the next part of this report we will focus more specifically on the main issues which have already been indicated in the overview and which need special attention in the next phase of future development.

Note on the ETS levels. The disturbing comment about 60 percent of grade 12 students who had not reached any usable knowledge of French (Doc 19:7) invites a further comment. This observation is based on the fact that these students had scored in the 0 range on the ETS interview test. While one should not whitewash these results, it is important to point out a characteristic of the scale used: it is somewhat insensitive to improvements in proficiency at the lower end of the scale. For this reason it has recently been revised to allow learners under school conditions of learning a second language to register the kind of progress that can normally be expected in these circumstances. Thus, what on the old scale appears simply as 0 or 0+, on the new ACTFL/ETS scale represent 4 steps:

no ability whatever
novice low
novice mid
novice high

The new scale covers the lowest six steps on the old scale from 0 to 2+ in 9 distinct steps. At the upper end of this new scale the designation "advanced plus" corresponds to 2+ on the old scale. This means that the 2, 2+ and 3 levels on the old scale which are the proficiency levels expected for FSL teachers and Immersion students represent the highest levels on the new scale: "advanced plus" and "superior". The new scale does not even attempt to make the upper end distinctions betweeen 3, 3+, 4, 4+, and 5 on the old scale. This comment should therefore help to put the lower levels of proficiency in proportion. Although 60 percent scored 0 or 0+ on the old scale this does not mean that they had made no progress. It simply means that the old scale was not designed to register these early stages of language proficiency. (For a more detailed explanation, consult Higgs 1984, particularly the comparative tabulation on p.28)

PART 3

THE MAIN ISSUES

The main issues to which language education in New Brunswick will have to address itself are, I believe, the following:

1 the imbalance between Immersion and Core
2 the design and quality of the Core program
3 the demand for more highly qualified FSL teachers

1 *Imbalance between Immersion and Core*

Immersion, especially Early Immersion, is believed by many people, particularly many parents, to be the 'best' program in producing high levels of bilingualism. For many people it is seen as the only answer to the FSL question and for this reason they are of the opinion that it should be made as widely accessible as possible. As was already pointed out, the New Brunswick Chapter of the Canadian Parents for French advocates this policy.

There is, however, a sizeable body of opinion which is less positive about Immersion and would like to contain Immersion in some way. They hold this view not because Immersion is not efficient as a means of learning French, but because of the pressures it exercises on the school system as a whole. The New Brunswick Teachers Association is concerned about the potential threat to teachers' jobs in the regular program; the dilemma is well expressed in this statement: "Although the continued expansion of French Immersion, particularly early immersion, impacts negatively on the employment of English-speaking teachers, there can be little doubt that the program succeeds in making students proficient in the second language." (Doc 33:43)

Some of my other informants, representing the New Brunswick Trustees Association, the Home and School Association, and the School Superintendents Association are concerned about the direct or indirect costs of Early Immersion, the funds that might be diverted, for example, from library resources, and the inordinate amount of time and effort used in organizing Early Immersion which is time and effort NOT spent on other curriculum issues which are equally important but are crowded out by the preoccupation with Early Immersion.

Early Immersion is also seen as having excessive prestige with parents. Therefore it attracts good student; it encourages elitism; it is a 'bandwagon' which go-ahead parents are eager to join--not because they necessarily believe in Immersion as a form of education, but because it is seen as the 'right' program by parents who care about their child's education. Regular class teachers feel they have to look after the 'left-overs', the unenlightened whose parents did not take up the Immersion option. Immersion thus becomes a divisive factor in schools.

In short, valuable as Early Immersion may be in itself, it is perceived by some as gobbling up an inordinate portion of the educational pie. Needless to say that those who think more positively about Immersion believe that the social side effects are vastly exaggerated. From my perspective as an outside observer I would say that I do not think that these concerns can be disregarded.

Because the consequences of an uncontrolled further spread of Early Immersion worry some educators, there is among them a great deal of interest in Late Immersion as a less drastic solution, and they eagerly look for evidence to show that Late Immersion is 'just as good'. Unfortunately the research evidence is not unequivocal on this issue. As we saw, Lapkin and Swain (1984) did not find many differences in their test results, but on attitudinal grounds and general considerations favour Early Immersion. Genesee (1983) in a detailed review of this issue comes out as ambiguous on the question of Early versus Late as is the body of research he has analysed. Research alone, for the present, could not help the policy maker to come to a firm decision on this issue.

Some administrators and policy makers look to an improved Core program as an answer to the pressure exercised by Immersion, and some very promising activities have already been reported in some school districts which strengthen the Core program, such as Extended French (Core plus one or two other subjects in French), Enriched or Enhanced Core (Core with a greater time allowance and additional activities), which includes Core with summer camp activities, or summer immersion periods,and so on.

A number of language teaching specialists have in recent years expressed an interest in a renewed and improved Core program. The interest in a strengthened Core is quite widespread across Canada. For example, the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers has recently set up a special committee which is charged to explore ways of improving Core French. As we have already noted, this trend of thought is also reflected in some of the New Brunswick documents and the activities reported there.

Important as these developments are, a caution is, however, in order at this point. For the time being the idea of a strengthened Core as an answer to an excessive spread of Immersion is a hunch and a hope. We have no firm evidence to show that a renewed Core could offer an equivalent of what we now expect from Immersion. If an Immersion program ensures that a majority of students reach a proficiency level of 3 or 3+, we would be rash to promise that we have Core programs that could *guarantee* even a level 2 for most students. Our hope may be that, one day, and not in too distant a future, Core programs will aim at level 3, but as long as we cannot be sure of even reaching a level 2 it would be premature to try to contain or to dismantle Immersion which, for the time being, is our best hope of achieving under school conditions relatively high levels of French proficiency among ordinary students.

In the next part of this report I would like to suggest other reasons, too, why Immersion should be maintained, but in the present context it is sufficient to say that, according to the Lapkin-Swain report (1984), Immersion is as successful in New Brunswick as it is elsewhere and is the best guarantee for a high level of proficiency in French. Consequently, the school districts may have to live with some of the negative side effects and simply try to mitigate them as much as possible. The sooner Core French can be improved, the quicker it will be possible to attain a better balance between Core and Immersion and in this way to take the heat off Immersion.

2 *The design and quality of the Core program*

A disturbing feature of the data I have considered for this report is that,in spite of considerable efforts (the Junior High School Project, the 1200 Hour Program, the reduction in the size of classes, the curriculum development activities, the appointment of coordinators, and other measures), the common complaint in the documents and in verbal reports is the poor quality of the Core program: "purposeless", "boring", "dreadfully slow", "going round in circles" are the comments that recur. Some blame the poor materials, others the lack of language teaching skill and of language proficiency among teachers. Students are not motivated to learn French, and skilful teaching is not available in sufficient quantity to overcome the lack of motivation. The 1,200 hour target is far from being met. Class teachers who have the responsibility for French may not give the expected 30 or 45 minutes to French and spend the time on other matters. Capable Core French teachers have moved to Immersion to the detriment of Core.

It is hard to reconcile with these criticisms the sense of progress we have reported earlier. It is likely that some of the developments in organisation, teacher training, or curriculum have not yet filtered into the classrooms. It is also possible that in many instances the home room teacher is expected to teach French and he/she may not have sufficient command of the language to do it well. In budget terms, it is more economical for the home room teacher rather than for a specialist to teach French. But this economy measure may be at the price of the quality of French instruction, although, ideally, it is educationally desirable for French to be integrated into the general school program.

Besides the question of the advantages of a specialist versus the home room teacher, a review of the Core program raises other questions: e.g., at what age or grade level the program should begin, what time allocation it should be given from year to year, and how continuity and good articulation from grade to grade and level to level are to be ensured.

Finally, another open question is the role of the senior high school in the improvement of Core French. In the enquiries for this report there was little indication of a distinct role of the French Core program at this level. Individual teachers were

mentioned whose effect on student achievement was said to be remarkable, but there was no indication that high school French teachers as a group have as yet tackled the question of how senior high schools could best make a specific contribution in the search for an improved Core program.

3 *The demand for more qualified FSL teachers.*
The problem of teacher training and supply has been foremost in the discussions I have participated in. There was again unanimity of viewpoint that the quality of the teaching of French is often inadequate because of a shortage of teachers qualified to teach French and that the upgrading of the teachers in the language itself and in teaching methodology must be a priority in future developments. The Tracadie program and the ambitious and bold Immersion Teacher Retraining experiment show the determination with which this question is being tackled. The New Brunswick Teachers Association also gives second language teacher training and retraining a high priority in its brief submitted to the Office of Government Reform. (Doc 33:48-9,52) The New Brunswick universities and some individual university teachers in Faculties of Education or Departments of French play a significant part in this struggle to improve the qualifications of teachers. But it is still an open question whether the universities do enough in this respect and, if not, how their contribution to academic and professional teacher education might be strengthened.

PART 4
THE SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS AND PLANS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

In this part of the report we will focus on suggestions for future developments and proposed solutions to the issues that have been identified.

Two views of future needs

There is a clear awareness among policy makers, administrators, and language educators of the crucial issues facing New Brunswick with regard to FSL. Two examples which illustrate well this understanding of the issues are two recent reports.

A Study of Second Language (French) Programs, a project which was undertaken by the Board of School Trustees of District 26 (Fredericton) (Doc 16), addresses itself to the first of the three issues, the question of balance between immersion-type and core-type programs. In the first place, this enquiry sets out dispassionately the characteristics of the different options, weighing them up carefully one against the other. It also examined parents' choices and grade 12 students' views, and it analysed briefs and correspondence on the issue of French language programs and thus reflects the different opinions on the various program options. The study concludes with a set of recommendations in the following order of priority:

A. Retain Early Immersion
B. Implement Late Immersion...
C. Implement Enriched Core simultaneously with Late Immersion, if financially feasible
D. Implement Post High School Immersion...
E Implement the Core French Program at the first grade level

These recommendations indicate a desire to accommodate a variety of solutions to the language issue in schools. It may be assumed that such a variety responds well to the diverse wishes of different groups of parents. From the point of view of budget and administration, it is presumably a more costly solution to the problem than one in which fewer options or no options are allowed for.

A second example of a provincial plan for future FSL development is mainly concerned with the other two issues, the Core curriculum and teacher training. It appears in the submission of the New Brunswick Teachers' Association(NBTA) to the Office of Government Reform, *Curriculum for the 80's and 90's*.(Doc 33). In this document, which treats all aspects of curriculum development, FSL is recognised as an essential component in what is described as "the instructional core" at all levels of schooling.

The part of this report which deals especially with FSL acknowledges the merits of Immersion but makes its main plea for

the improvement of Core. Like the Fredericton study (Doc 16), it acknowledges the existence of different types of programs and recognises their value. It analyses possible causes for the poor quality of Core (Doc 33:44-45) and suggests a new approach to the Core curriculum.

Its other main proposal is a strengthening of teaching qualifications. It demands that new teachers should have a proficiency level of 3 on the ETS scale and be adequately trained in language teaching methodology. For incumbent teachers it makes a tough recommendation: teachers must reach the proficiency level of 3 within five years or be told to get out of teaching FSL.

The NBTA submission urges the Minister of Education (1) to establish a systematic teacher retraining programme and (2) to initiate a revision of the Core program curriculum. It also recommends that the FSL needs of vocational students be catered for. This report thus presents an excellent and concise overview of key issues and focuses on two important deficiency areas: FSL teacher training and the Core curriculum.

Reductionist policies

Not all proposals for future developments are so insightful and enlightened as the two we have just considered. We should now take note of a small number of proposals which are prompted by the entirely justifiable aim to simplify the system and to cut costs. In my view, however, these suggestions are misleading and often dangerously simplistic, and my advice would be to beware of them.

(1) *Abandoning immersion.* The possibility of an an improved Core program is of special interest to those who are opposed to Immersion. But it must be emphasised once more that a substantial improvement of FSL learning through a strengthening of Core French is as yet mainly a suggestion and a plan, not a certain fact. It is therefore not, as yet, a ready-made solution that can be offered to school districts at the present time. The weaknesses of Core (curriculum and teacher supply) cannot be remedied overnight. Immersion, on the other hand, can be said to guarantee reasonably high levels of second language competence here and now. It would therefore be extremely unwise and quite premature for a school board to attempt to dismantle the immersion structure that has only recently been built up and is only now beginning to produce results. I would strongly urge that the policy of maintaining and developing Immersion be allowed to continue to grow and develop further until alternative options have been put into place, have been operational for a period of years, and have begun to prove their worth.

(2) *Reducing the Core program.* Another reductionist suggestion that was brought to my attention is the proposal to focus in Core programs mainly on reading, because "in later life most students won't need anything else". This argument was used over half a century ago in U.S. foreign language teaching with disastrous

results. It was as a reaction against the failure of this policy that teachers, since World War II,were urged to emphasise oral communication and more recently a four-skills approach. Admittedly, during certain phases of language learning it is legitimate to emphasise, for example, receptive skills, i.e., listening and reading, more than productive skills, speaking and writing; but this is certainly no justification for reducing the ultimate objectives of language learning in schools to such a narrowly restricted emphasis. Quite contrary to this conception, it is widely believed among language teaching specialists today that the Core curriculum is too narrow as it is and that it needs a much wider rather than an even narrower focus.

(3) *Cutting out the 'frills'?* Budgetary concerns prompt a third reductionist policy. They may arise from a lack of understanding of the nature of second language learning. These are attempts to cut away 'frills' from the language teaching budget, that is activities which are misleadingly often described as 'extramural','extracurricular', or 'supplementary'. Such budget cuts affect activities as student exchanges, immersion summer camps, immersion weekends, immersion blocks of time, as well as resources derived from other school subjects taught in French in an Extended or Enriched Core program. These cuts may be prompted by a narrow classroom view of language learning. It can be confidently stated that such activities and the expenditures resulting from them should no longer be considered optional extras. They are part of what today would be considered the essence of what language learning is all about. I would therefore urge those who control FSL funding to recognise that these activities should be treated as a necessary component of language instruction for funding purposes.

Two approaches to the immersion-core dilemma

Setting aside the reductionist solutions, there is widespread consensus that the Core program must be strengthened and substantially improved in order to constitute a more powerful and more attractive option. The analysis and major recommendations of the NBTA report we have considered above (Doc 33:43-52) would probably be widely approved: emphasis on teacher training including inservice and Core curriculum reform.

There is far less consensus on the future of Immersion. Most informants readily admit the value of a strong Immersion program as the best way at present available to ensure that a sizeable proportion of the Anglophone school population reaches reasonable levels of bilingualism. This for some overrides other considerations; others, however, regard the social and administrative problems created by immersion as too important, and they would therefore like immersion to be somehow contained or controled.

The best hope for a way out of this dilemma lies perhaps in one or the other of the following two schemes which offer a combination of Core and Immersion.

Scheme 1: A multiple-program approach. This option, already illustrated by the study of School District 26, offers the greatest degree of variety and flexibility. It would be the continuation of the policy currently pursued in the Province in which no uniformity is demanded across school districts or within school districts, and school districts make their own choice among the various types of programme and combine them in ways which appear most practicable, most effective, and most acceptable to the population they serve.

The rationale for this policy is that there is no single solution that can be confidently recommended as the only appropriate one. It is possible that, with further experience of the various options, preferences will gradually begin to declare themselves, and the multiplicity will automatically decline. It would, however, be arbitrary to impose, say, Early Immersion and a particular version of Core as the only two options. Instead, the kind of carefully reasoned choice of options arranged in an order of priority, worked out in the study of District 26, reflects perhaps best the accommodation between personal preferences and the current state of knowledge on FSL programs. School districts also differ in their requirements. Some school districts are eager to develop their Core program into Extended Core with mini-immersion blocks, or plan to introduce Post-High School Immersion.

While this multiple program approach allows for greatest flexibility within districts and for regional variations across the Province, it is the most complex and probably also the most costly in budgetary terms. A simpler arrangement is bound to be financially more cost-effective and easier to administer.

Scheme 2: A single program approach. It can be argued, as it has recently been done by some responsible informants, that in New Brunswick high levels of bilingualism should not be considered an option but a necessity, and therefore programs that can secure it should be considered a normal part of education. Hence a combination of Core and Immersion would be politically the most democratic, while financially and administratively it would be easier to operate than the variety of possibilities implied in Scheme 1. According to this conception, the French program could be arranged across New Brunswick according to the following pattern:

grades 1, 2, and 3: Enriched Core
grades 4, 5, and 6: Total Immersion (all subjects except English Language Arts offered in French)
grades 7, 8, and 9: Partial Immersion
grades 10, 11, and 12: French Language Arts course plus one or more optional subjects in French

Other combinations of Core with Immersion can be envisaged. For example, there might be a preference for the immersion block to be delayed to the Junior High School. Whatever the combina-

tion, Immersion has become in this scheme part of a uniform regular curriculum, and it is no longer an alternative programme freely chosen by parents and students. Since one of the objections to Immersion has been that it displaces Anglophone teachers who do not speak French well enough to teach in Immersion, this objection would of course also apply to this scheme at whatever level it was finally decided to place the Immersion component.

It is clear that a single and universal program combining Core and Immersion could not be introduced without the approval and support of parents, teachers, and students.

As a variant on this scheme, the Core program could, for example, be interspersed with shorter Immersion blocks at different grade levels at several stages of the school career. For the present, no single pattern can be confidently recommended as the most effective.

If this scheme is selected province-wide, the timing of the immersion component or components, should be selected on practical and educational grounds. Ideally, a limited period of experimentation should be allowed for so as to decide empirically which is the most useful combination of Immersion and Core.

Remedial services. Among aspects which so far have not yet received any systematic attention, an important consideration should be the inevitable fact that, if all students receive French language training over a long period of schooling, there will always be a few exceptionally slow learners and others who experience a variety of major difficulties in the second language, seriously impeding their educational progress. While French teachers must always expect to cope with the normal range of differences in language aptitude and proficiency, in a province in which FSL plays such a key role in the school curriculum it is necessary to make provision for students with exceptional second language problems, and it is,therefore, timely to organise some form of diagnostic and remedial service for these exceptional difficulties alongside similar facilities in basic school subjects.

French for vocational and business students. Another omission that several informants would like to see remedied is the lack of provision in FSL at senior high school level for students who take vocational and business courses. Those students, it was rightly pointed out, who later work, say, in a service station, in a restaurant or hotel and who therefore are in contact with the general public, need French just as much as those who opt for academic courses in which, traditionally, French is found. The special needs of these students should be taken into consideration in future curriculum development for French at the senior high school level.

The French curriculum for these students should, however, not be thought of as narrowly vocational or designed as a 'Mickey-Mouse' alternative in contrast to a more serious academic

senior high school option. Such an approach would be doomed to failure from the start. Since a modern approach at all levels and in all types of program is likely to aim at being 'communicative', the curriculum for, say, grade 10 vocational or business students should not differ greatly from that of other grade 10 students, although it might include a certain 'special purpose' bias.

PART 5
RETHINKING SOME OF THE ISSUES

In this part of the report I want to make some observations on certain aspects of French programs which, in my view, should be taken into account in planning for the future.

Immersion as bilingual education

Whether Immersion and Core are combined in a single programme (Scheme 2) or kept relatively distinct as different program options (Scheme 1), in either case it is important to be clear about the educational consequences of the Immersion-Core distinction which, I believe, have tended to be overlooked in discussions on the merits and demerits of Immersion.

The focus of attention in weighing up Core and Immersion has always been a single criterion: the relative degree of proficiency in French that students will be expected to reach. It is of course an extremely important consideration. After all, better learning of French was the main reason for which Immersion was first experimented with in St. Lambert, and it has been the central concern of all those who have advocated the Immersion solution. What has been largely left out of consideration, however, are other educational implications of an immersion-type form of schooling.

Any Immersion program, whether it is Early or Late Immersion, is a program of bilingual and bicultural education. The intention is not to turn little Anglophones into little Francophones. Students will retain their Anglophone identity. Nevertheless, Immersion provides a form of Anglophone education which has a strong French language component throughout and includes French language-based cultural experiences. This is why it is, and should be, a bilingual-bicultural education in the best sense. It is therefore an alternative form of schooling with a special French orientation and emphasis.

Such bilingual-bicultural schooling is entirely justified anywhere in Canada but is particularly appropriate, for personal-utilitarian reasons as well as on sociocultural and sociopolitical grounds, in a province which is officially bilingual. Parents who express concern about "too much French" are obviously not the right kind of parents to have chosen Immersion for their child. Likewise, administrators who wonder whether the Immersion classes are not "too French in outlook", in my view, have not thought through the implications of Immersion education. Students who have completed immersion-type schooling should be able to continue their higher education bilingually. In later life they ought to be the kind of people from which society recruits its bilingual politicians, judges, teachers, business people, and administrators that are urgently needed in a bilingual province.

What, then, characterises this type of education is its continuing bilingual nature. Early Immersion *starts* early but it should not *finish* early. It should continue throughout the period of schooling as a bilingual program. Late Immersion may start a few years later but it has the same characteristics once it has started. The proportions of English and French may change in Immersion programs but they always remain inevitably a strongly French oriented alternative form of schooling.

An Immersion program, then, is more than a convenient way of learning French. It provides an opportunity of a truly bilingual-bicultural education. New Brunswick has established the groundwork for it as an alternative form of schooling. In the foreseeable future it is likely to continue to have the support of a sizeable number of parents who welcome these opportunities for their children.

The place of Core.

If Immersion offers the opportunity to learn French (and to learn it well) in a bilingual education form of schooling, a Core program, ideally, *should* offer the opportunity to learn it well as a curriculum subject in an English-based regular school program. At present, Core does not meet this requirement. Core is set up as a minimal French program, and it is perceived by parents and the general public as inadequate. Therefore, parents who want their child to become "functionally bilingual" must choose immersion, whether they want a bilingual education for their child or not. School systems--nationwide, not only in New Brunswick--are simply not geared to offer an English-based education with a strong French program.

Among French teachers there is today a rising tide of opinion that this need not be so. It is believed that a Core program with a fairly generous time allowance of between 1,200 hours or 2000 hours could be designed to produce much higher levels of French among ordinary students. If not quite as high as one would expect from a *good* immersion program, it should still lead, on the ETS scale, to a proficiency level of 2 or 3, and have other educational merits besides. The interest that is displayed in some school districts of New Brunswick in Enriched, Enhanced, or Extended Core French programs, and in experiments with mini-immersion and immersion summer camps is evidence of the interest in the Province in these relatively new developments of a more effective expanding Core French.

While these new approaches to Core French have not yet been systematically evaluated, they are promising. They suggest that an expanded Core curriculum has every chance of providing a valid near-alternative to learning French in Immersion. This would mean that higher levels of proficiency could be reached in regular language programs than is commonly assumed today, and that, additionally, the program could be so designed as to be educationally more rewarding than the conventional Core French course tends to be today. It must, however,be stressed that this

prospect needs testing. It is not a given we can take for granted. Some sort of mechanism is needed for curriculum development, research, and evaluation, if we want the Core program to develop along the suggested lines, and to become a solid alternative to the currently popular Immersion. (See Part 6 below; see also Stern 1984a)

Late Immersion and Other Curriculum Options. In New Brunswick many questions are being asked about various program permutations; for example, is Late Immersion as good as Early Immersion? What can we expect from Post High School Immersion? On these questions, as we have seen, research does not speak with clarity and unanimity. However, rather than looking to research for a final answer, we should look upon these alternatives much more from the point of view of the quality of education they offer. Questions of teacher supply, administrative costs, comparative effectiveness, parental demands, and social benefits continue to be necessary considerations. Whatever research is available should of course also be taken into account. But the key question must be: what are the educational merits of a given type of program?

If we look at Late Immersion in this way, we may come to a more valid decision than we would by trying to weigh up the research evidence alone. Comparing Late Immersion with Early Immersion purely on the basis of "what research says," we may find that Early Immersion has probably a certain advantage over Late Immersion with regard to French proficiency. But these advantages are not so overwhelming that by themselves they suggest a clear choice between these two Immersion options.

If, instead, we look at this choice more from an educational perspective, we are likely to ask a different type of question. Both Early and Late Immersion, as we said, provide a bilingual education. The kind of questions that parents as well as school trustees and administrators have to ask themselves is: At what stage in a school career do we wish to make a child's education bilingual? Some parents, for example, may argue that they would like their child to have his/her first introduction to schooling in the native language and to delay bilingual education until grade four or thereabouts. Others may feel that the earlier the bilingual process begins the better. Early Immersion provides the conditions for a full and uncompromising bilingual education. Late Immersion, on the other hand, represents a bilingual education which only begins after the induction into schooling (including Core French) and the induction into literacy have already been achieved in English.

In contrast to these two forms of bilingual education, the third option, Core French, implies the choice of an English based general education in which French does not play a dominant role, but, given curriculum reform and better teacher training, could still be effective as an introduction to French.

Accommodation between these different points of view is of course quite possible. Several school districts have already

introduced immersion blocks into the Core French program. Post High School Immersion would fulfil a similar function. The various combinations of Immersion with Core that are already being tried attempt to provide ways and means of integrating the bilingual-bicultural aspect of Immersion with an English-based education offering Core French. The two schemes we considered in Part 3 represent two different ways of achieving a compromise among these options.

Changes in the Immersion curriculum

In this report we have frequently referred to the need for the Core curriculum to be thoroughly revised. It should however be pointed out that the Immersion curriculum, in spite of the success and spread of Immersion, is also in need of revision. The modifications that Immersion is likely to undergo in the near future obviously affect its role in the planning of FSL programs.

Immersion needs to rethink its curriculum policy so as to meet the challenge of a truly bilingual education. Immersion programs that are recommended to parents on the grounds that they are just the same as their English counterpart, "only that everything is taught in French", to my mind miss the point of bilingual schooling. For example, a history class in an Immersion program taught in French is surely not simply a translated "Anglo" history of New Brunswick or Canada. If an Immersion program is to prepare for mutual understanding between the language groups it would also have to transmit some of the values, perspectives, and points of view of Acadians and other Francophones in Canada. There is more to Immersion, then, than language proficiency. There is the transmission of cultural knowledge and appreciation of Francophone values and the acquisition of new attitudes. The interplay of English and French in Immersion programs may still have to be further developed and refined over the entire school career to meet the bilingual and bicultural objectives and the full potential of this type of schooling.

From other points of view, too, the Immersion curriculum is being questioned, For example, the teaching of reading in Early Immersion classes is often too much taken for granted. Learning to read in a second language is different in certain respects from learning to read in the native language. Even as a form of language training, although of course more effective than what has hitherto been offered in Core-type language programs, Immersion has limitations which are recognised and are beginning to be studied today in order to overcome them.

All these considerations indicate that Immersion is entering a new phase in which a much more critical view is being taken of the Immersion curriculum. It is important in the future development of Immersion in New Brunswick to take note of these ongoing changes in the approach to Immersion, and it is likely that, on the basis of the lessons of the past, Immersion-type programs can become even more effective and educationally more valid than they often tend to be at present.

Criteria and standards for FSL teaching

As we saw previously, it is widely recognised in New Brunswick that the improvement in FSL crucially depends on the quality of French teachers. We have also noted that the NBTA report has made quite specific recommendations on teacher qualifications and training, both for new teachers and incumbents. I agree that it is important for the Province to establish certain criteria and standards as a first step in raising the level of FSL teaching. Therefore the development of these criteria and standards should be a matter of high priority in the immediate future.

However, I do not believe that it is possible and equitable for me at this point to determine such standards and define these criteria simply by a stroke of the pen. Instead, I propose as a measure of early priority the setting up of a task force on FSL teacher qualifications which would determine (and periodically revise) minimum qualifications, standards, and criteria. The work of such a task force would have immediate bearing on the official recognition of teachers, as well as on supervision, and it could also give useful direction to initial and inservice training and workshops.

PART 6

AN FSL CENTRE: SKETCH OF A PROPOSAL

Core programs, Immersion, and combinations between the two are firmly established in New Brunswick. A great deal has been achieved in setting up a sound system of second language education. However, much remains to be done to resolve the issues that have been identified in the discussions. Certain conclusions are clear:

1 The system needs better FSL teachers. This may have implications for initial teacher education, but it also means more provision for regular inservice FSL teacher education. The Tracadie program is excellent, but it is a summer school which alone cannot meet the demand for FSL teacher training, particularly regular inservice training and workshops.

2 Both Immersion and Core are in need of systematic curriculum development and implementation.

3 As changes in the programs across the Province are tried in new pilot projects and various curriculum options as well as resource materials are tested, there will be a need for regular evaluation and other research.

The combination of these three functions--FSL inservice teacher education, curriculum development, and curriculum evaluation--could well be brought together in a single unit or centre for FSL. The three functions support each other, and if FSL is to continue to be developed vigorously, it needs the full attention of a few people over a number of years. Such a unit could additionally also exercise a dissemination function and serve administrators, trustees, and parents in their efforts to strengthen the bilingual capabilities in the Province.

A centre with these three main functions in mind could exercise a considerable influence on the continued development of all types of FSL programs and could also provide a greater measure of continuity in teacher training and professional development than university courses alone and the summer course at Tracadie by itself can do. The existing inservice program at Tracadie should of course be maintained. It might even be organised under the auspices of this centre. The centre would additionally provide courses, workshops, and meetings in other parts of the Province and throughout the year. It could be a useful venue for school district coordinators and it could further undertake some of the necessary information and dissemination function on the French programs that would be useful to principals, administrators, trustees, and parents. A centre should maintain a professional library for FSL teachers and collect the essential professional documentation and resource materials for FSL.

Administratively and academically, the centre could be established either as a unit of the Department of Education or as a unit of a university, for example, of the University of New

Brunswick, or possibly both. Such co-operation already occurs. The advantage of a distinct unit within the orbit of UNB would be that it could draw on the interests and expertise of several departments of the university that are likely to have an interest in some of these issues. Thus, the Faculty of Education would be an obvious resource department for curriculum and teacher training. Some members of the Faculty are already involved. The Centre would probably also attract members of the French Department whose co-operation would be very valuable; equally the Psychology Department might be interested, particularly in the evaluation aspect of the centre. Much of the work envisaged for the Centre is at present carried out on an ad hoc basis by the staff of the Department of Education, and a certain re-distribution of functions or personnel would be needed if the centre is created outside the Department.

Details of staffing, finance, physical location, administrative responsibility, and exact terms of reference need not be discussed in this report. They depend on the acceptability of the concept itself to the relevant authorities in New Brunswick. In general terms, it can be said that in a province in which French-English bilingualism is so central to the well-being of the province as a whole, it is reasonable to find one unit which focuses specifically on the question of second language education and provides a centre for teacher training, research and development, and dissemination.

Some research suggestions

The present study was prompted by the question whether it should be the preliminary of a much more comprehensive and detailed evaluative investigation. Prima facie there does not seem to be the need at present to go beyond what has been attempted in this limited and quite personal enquiry. A full study of all aspects of second language instruction in New Brunswick would be a major and costly undertaking, and one wonders whether any very useful purpose would be served. In my view, the main effort in the near future should be directed to teacher training and curriculum development rather than to a comprehensive review.

There are, however, some specific areas in which questions have arisen which in the near future should be more closely investigated. I would like to suggest two; both of them have bearing on the future development of policy in the issues we have identified:

1 *A study on the academic and professional education of FSL teachers in New Brunswick.* The lack of an adequate supply of FSL teachers presents one of the most obvious problems in the Province. While New Brunswick universities and particularly individual Faculty members have performed an important role in the development of FSL in New Brunswick, it is not clear to what extent French departments and Faculties of education adequately meet the growing needs for a constant supply of well trained FSL teachers. Such a study would attempt to find out strengths and weaknesses in the present arrangements for teacher preparation.

It would also help to clarify the role of the centre, if it were created, in relation to existing academic and professional structures.

2 A second necessary area for immediate investigation would be *the characteristics and effectiveness of the Core program.* As we have seen, a great deal has already been done in the Province to improve Core French. Yet, criticisms continue. A study which would examine the characteristics of the program in different parts of the Province and identify specific problems Core is facing could be helpful as a new base line study for future changes in Core programs. Such a study is obviously a major investigation. It might well be one of the first tasks for a new centre which, through an investigation on this subject, would receive valuable input on what the most urgent needs are.

CONCLUDING SUMMARY AND MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Bearing in mind the strong commitment of New Brunswick to bilingualism and bilingual education, this report concludes that a sound and appropriate framework for FSL instruction has been established. The full maintenance and an intensified future development of this framework is strongly recommended.

2 On the basis of the evidence that has been examined, a further conclusion is that there is a purposeful and justifiable allocation of funds to support and develop FSL without slack or unnecessary duplication. While the funding appears to be adequate to support a reasonable level of service there are instances of inadequacies, such as lack of funding for the necessary supply of FSL materials, for extramural activities, or for the avoidance of split-level classes. It is therefore hoped that the present level of funding for FSL is fully maintained and indeed raised so that the service can be strengthened and expanded in necessary new directions.

3 The variety of programs within school districts or across different districts does not constitute an uneconomical multiplication of effort. It partly reflects unavoidable uncertainties on what is optimal in second language instruction; partly it also reflects legitimate differences of opinion on the degree of bilingualism that can be demanded of Anglophone education. Consequently, the assessment of this report agrees with that of the NBTA brief to the Office of Government Reform which states:

> A number of O.G.R. officials appear to be concerned that there are too many French Second Language programs in the public schools... The implication is that this apparent proliferation is expensive and sometimes confusing to parents. We do not share that concern! There is a need for a variety of programs both to reflect the differing needs, abilities, and interests of students and the available resources of school districts. However, this does not mean that we cannot improve the programs. There are real problems to be addressed. (Doc 33:44)

4 The main issue for FSL lies in finding an acceptable balance between Immersion and its variants and variants of Core. In deciding on FSL program options the level of French proficiency to be attained is a determining factor. But it is not the only one. Another is the desired extent of bilingual-bicultural education. Further factors to be taken into account are costs and the impact of the program on the employment of teachers and school organization. Other social side effects should not be disregarded.

5 For future FSL directions, two possible program schemes have been proposed:

(a) One is a scheme with multiple program options which would offer a choice among different programs to be decided upon by each school district and flexibility of choice of programs within different school districts. This multiplicity would continue the status quo, prevailing at present in the Province, as a deliberate future policy direction;

(b) An alternative, suggested in this report, is to establish a uniform program across the Province which would combine the advantages of Core with Immersion. While this scheme is attractive from the point of view of simplicity and economy it presupposes that a single combination of Core and Immersion would be widely acceptable to school districts, parents and students. Some possible candidates for this scheme have been briefly outlined in the body of the report.

6 Whatever scheme is adopted for future growth, Immersion as well as Core are in need of a major emphasis on curriculum development. A mechanism is needed to undertake and implement such long-term curriculum development (see no.12 below).

7 In view of the expansion of FSL, attention should now be paid to the creation of FSL diagnostic and remedial services.

8 FSL curricula for vocational and business students at senior high school level should be developed.

9 An early priority should be the setting up of a task force to determine minimum criteria and standards for the qualification of FSL (Core and Immersion) teachers.

10 Another related direction for the future is to give special attention to the preservice and inservice preparation of FSL teachers for Immersion as well as Core.

11 A more detailed and comprehensive research study elaborating and fully documenting what the present report has attempted to do impressionistically and in outline is, in my view, NOT called for. However, two more specific studies have been proposed: (1) an investigation on Core French in New Brunswick in order to document and analyse the main characteristics of current Core French programs as a first step in a major reform of Core French; (2) an examination of FSL teacher training with the question in mind as to what should be done to raise the level of French proficiency and teaching methodology among FSL teachers in the Province.

12 A final recommendation is the creation of a French Second Language Centre for New Brunswick. This centre could be established under the auspices of the Department of Education or the University of New Brunswick or perhaps under joint auspices. The centre would be responsible for several of the tasks which

have been outlined above and would have as its main terms of reference: (1) FSL curriculum development and implementation, (2) teacher inservice training (3) research and evaluation, and (4) documentation and information on FSL.

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LIST OF DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

1 Historical account
2 New Brunswick Curriculum Guide, 1978
3 Core French statement 1984
4 Pour l'amour du francais, 1983
5 Draft Curriculum Guide for the Senior High School
6 Phonetique: guide, 1983
7 Potpourri secondaire
8 French Second Language Curriculum Guide, 1984
9 Map of school districts and immersion statistics 1983
10A Francais a l'elementaire: programme 1re a 3e annee Immersion
10B Français à l'élémentaire: programme 4e à 6e année Immersion
11 Français: 7e et 8e année Immersion tardive
12 Français: 7e, 8e, et 9e année Immersion précoce
13 List of immersion materials
14 Time table of early and late immersion programme development, Department of Education, 1982
15 List of Core French materials by school districts
16 A Study of Second Language (French) Programs District 26 project
17 Second Language Services: Grants to School Districts, 1984-5
18 Report of the Internal Committee on the Teaching of French Second Language in New Brunswick, 1979
19 Base Year Study of Second Language Competencies of Grade 12 Students (attached to Doc 18)
20 Dalhousie: S.D.36 report by J.R.Haché
21 Sackville: S.D.14 documents (C.Leblanc)
22 Saint John: S.D.20 documents (D.Daigle)
23 Handbook for Elementary Schools, 1983-4
24 Fredericton; S.D.26 document (E.Goguen)
25 Interim Report on the Immersion Retraining Program, 1982-3
26 S.D.8: Documents (R. Bourque)
27 Moncton: S.D.15 (D.Mazerolle)
28 Summary Report of Task Force on Official Languages (1982)
29 Misc. Tracadie papers
30 Budget documents
31 School Superintendents Association: documents (G.Hatheway, J.Lang)
32 Canadian Parents for French: document (B.Fleming, S.Purdy)
33 New Brunswick Teachers' Association, Curriculum for the 80's and 90's

34 B.Lydon's letter re documentation
35 Lapkin, S. and Swain, M. Final Report on the Evaluation of French Immersion Programs at Grades 3,6 and 9 in New Brunswick

VISITS TO NEW BRUNSWICK

June 10-13 Meetings with Deputy Minister and Department of Education personnel. Meetings with school district co-ordinators. Visits to schools in Fredericton. Meeting the Board of Trustees of School District 26

July 20-22 Visit to Tracadie

August 26-28 Meetings with representatives of the New Brunswick School Trustees' Association, the New Brunswick School Superintendents' Association, the New Brunswick Home and School Association, and the New Brunswick Teachers' Association.